

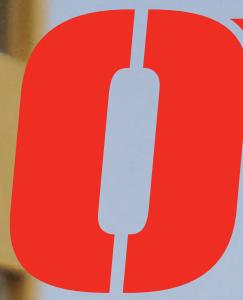
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MotoGP

## 800 over and out...

The five year life span of 800cc motorcycles in MotoGP came to a conclusion with this gripping race in Valencia, a circuit not normally renowned for providing exciting race fare. Fifteen thousands of a second was the difference between Ben Spies and Casey Stoner's tenth victory of 2011 in the rain-hit face-off

Photo by Monster Energy/Milagro





MotoGP

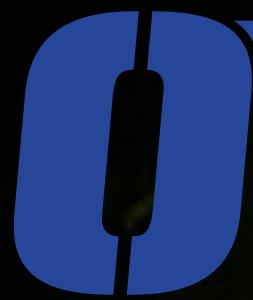
## Sic given noisy send-off...

The paddock filled the grid and a section of the start straight on Sunday at Ricardo Tormo to pay their respects to Marco Simoncelli. Kevin Schwantz led a procession of Grand Prix riders around the circuit on the '58' Honda before a noisy spell of remembrance pre-empted the first race of the day

Photo by Monster Energy/Milagro







AMA-MX

## Lights on at Bercy...

The Palais Omnisports arena at Bercy in Paris gets a quick bath of light as a rehearsal for the 29th edition of the famous supercross takes place before three nights of action. America would win the overall event for the second year in a row mainly thanks to the consistency of Kyle Chisholm

Photo by Monster Energy/Jeremie Carrere







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**MOTOGP**

**GRAN PREMIO GENERALI DE  
RICARDO TORMO · NOVEMBER 6th**

**MotoGP winner: Casey Stoner, Honda**  
**Moto2 winner: Michele Pirro, Moriwaki**  
**125cc winner: Maverick Vinales, Aprilia**

# A DAY TO REMEMBER

By Gavin Emmett  
Photos by Monster Energy/Milagro,  
Honda Pro Images, Ducati Corse Press



# LA COMUNITAT VALENCIANA



Stoner lines up Spies on the final corner for one of the closest finishes in Grand Prix history



MotoGP arrived in Valencia under a black cloud both figuratively and literally. The weather swirled around for three days and was not easy to judge

It's fair to say that in terms of the on-track racing that 2011 hasn't been a vintage for MotoGP. A veteran Spanish broadcaster this weekend suggested to me that he would have switched the times of the races around this year, so that Moto2 took the limelight, 125 was in the middle and MotoGP was left in the shadows! Then again, he's a big Marquez fan and Terol was winning the last 125cc championship so he may be accused of a slight national bias.

Although it may seem that the crowds felt the same, with the grandstands at Valencia not as packed as usual, I'd suggest this was more thanks to economical and meteorological factors than people voting with their feet. Those few who stayed away may well have regretted it too, as we were treated to a truly fantastic curtain-closer despite the constant sprinkles of rain.

Schwartz parks Simoncelli's race bike on the grid. In the background a huge Sic banner covered the control tower



The climate had proved a factor all weekend in preventing riders from spending any significant length of time getting their bikes set-up.

A damp first MotoGP practice was followed by a soaking wet one on Friday afternoon, the chilly weather never allowing the track to dry completely. Saturday morning's session started in bright blue sunshine but then the dark clouds swooped in and qualifying became a risky affair.

Riders were forced to use dry tyres in wet conditions, and perhaps unsurprisingly it was Casey Stoner who prospered with a record-equalling twelfth pole of the year. When similar conditions loomed in the air for Sunday Stoner went off at the front to build a ten-second lead, it looked like another routine win for the Aussie.



Behind him the race wasn't so routine. After four riders including both factory Ductis fell at the opening bend, Andrea Dovizioso and Dani Pedrosa became embroiled in a fierce battle for second place and third overall in the championship. The passing manoeuvres were numerous, the aggression both riders showed was uncharacteristic, but the desire to take MotoGP's bronze medal was palpable. It was thrilling. Ben Spies waited patiently behind the duo to seize his moment when the two became

vulnerable. He made his first pounce past Pedrosa on lap 24 of 30, before making the same move on Dovizioso two laps later. Second place seemed the likelihood.

That's when the rain began to fall heavier however. It had been spitting from the start of the race, but gradually it began to worsen and Stoner's lead was dramatically wiped out as he ploughed his lone furrow up front. As Pedrosa dropped into the clutches of Crutchlow and

Bautista hits Dovizioso and causes carnage at the first corner, taking both Ducatis and Randy De Puniet out of the race. Everyone held momentarily their breath, hardly surprising after recent events...



Abraham who were scrapping for Rookie of the Year, Spies and Dovizioso closed on the World Champion.

On lap 27 Spies eased past when Stoner made a mistake and ran wide, but now the Australian had someone to follow and kept the Texan within sight. Heading up to the final corner Spies looked to have more than enough advantage to take the win, but an amazing surge out of turn 14 saw Stoner blast past to steal vic-

tory from under his nose by 15 thousandths of a second. The sudden skydive in emotions at Yamaha contrasted wildly with the surprise at Honda, but both riders seemed happy with the result – Stoner quickly apologising to Spies on the cool down lap.

Dovizioso took third in the race and ended his ten-year Honda career with third in the championship, whilst Pedrosa finished behind Crutchlow in fifth. It could have been worse



The Repsol Honda battle made the race seem much shorter than it was. Dovizioso finished on the podium and as the third best rider in the world

had Abraham not tried a strange manoeuvre in passing his rookie rival on the final lap, but he ran into the gravel and limped home eighth, whilst the Brit celebrated his country's best four-stroke MotoGP result.

All the action came after Sunday morning's immensely moving tribute to Marco Simoncelli, which just struck the right note as all riders from all classes joined SuperSic's bike being

ridden by his good friend Kevin Schwantz on a lap of the circuit. As the entire paddock gathered to await their return, fireworks added to the cacophony of noise requested by Marco's father Paolo.

The tribute continued during the Moto2 race, as Team Gresini's Michele Pirro took his first ever race win from his first ever pole position. The tears clearly visible in his eyes through

Team owner Gresini finished 2011 as a race winner in Moto2 and hugs new champion Bradl; the first German title holder in eighteen years. The Moto2 contest was denied an exciting finale between Bradl and the absent Marc Marquez after events in Sepang



his visor were matched by those of the mourning Fausto Gresini, and Pirro admitted divine intervention from Simoncelli must have helped him seal a lights-to-flag victory.

In the 125s an early crash for Johann Zarco put paid to his title aspirations, and the Valencian crowd went wild as Nico Terol could throw off the shackles and challenge for the victory as he paraded his new status of world

champion. In the end the all-Spanish podium was topped by rookie sensation Maverick Viñales, with team sponsor Paris Hilton waiting in parc fermé. He becomes the last-ever winner in 125s, the youngest ever rider to take back-to-back wins, and Terol of course the last ever champion before the switch to Moto3 next year.

Rossi's first year with Ducati ended in another gravel trap. The Italian (with dedicatory helmet) was more sad about missing the chance to honour his late friend Simoncelli





The eyes have it. Cal Crutchlow saves the best until last. A fiesty duel with Karel Abraham was decided in an incident that nearly took both to the floor but the Brit held on for a landmark result and revealed there could be a lot more in store for 2012





# FITTING TRIBUTE TO SIC...

By Gavin Emmett

The last GP of the season provided a brilliant day's racing, and after the tragedy of Malaysia was the sort of response the sport needed as a whole.

There were afro wigs, retro t-shirts, banners, posters and badges and everyone had Marco Simoncelli on their mind. The feeling I got however was that as soon as the riders got back on their bikes once more, their minds turned to the job at hand. It wasn't a dismissal of Marco's memory, in fact quite the contrary; these are racers who never more cruelly know the risks of their chosen profession than at this current time.

To ride at world championship level focus must be at one hundred per cent, one hundred per cent of the time. Marco knew that, and the challenge is what drove him, and drives the rest of the field. He would have wanted nothing more than the riders to get back out there and be free to do the thing they and he love.

The MotoGP family did pay their respects en masse of course, with a unique lap of the

circuit from all riders in the three championships before racing began on Sunday and the spectacle was stunning. Kevin Schwantz, who saw much of his own flamboyance in Simoncelli's style, led the impressive and raucous lap before the 'mascletà' of fire-crackers rang around the stadium-like Ricardo Tormo circuit.

Some were moved to tears, others like myself enjoyed a reflective moment about the man that had brought us to this tribute. He was a larger than life character, and the tribute was similarly bold. As the explosions went off, a huge banner of his gangly frame alongside his Honda was unfurled down the full height of the control tower.

For me, Loris Capirossi paid one of the most touching homages. In his 328th and final Grand Prix appearance in a career that had spanned 22-years, he forewent his famous #65 plate for the #58 of Simoncelli. His own farewell to the sport insignificant in comparison to his friend's demise, his tears in the garage after his last race told their own story - he was able to reflect upon having done what he loved for the last time.



# CLASSIFICATION & FINAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



## MotoGP RESULT

### Riders

|          |                       |        |
|----------|-----------------------|--------|
| <b>1</b> | Casey Stoner, AUS     | Honda  |
| <b>2</b> | Ben Spies, USA        | Yamaha |
| <b>3</b> | Andrea Dovizioso, ITA | Honda  |
| <b>4</b> | Cal Crutchlow, GBR    | Yamaha |
| <b>5</b> | Dani Pedrosa, SPA     | Honda  |

## MotoGP FINAL CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

| Riders   |                  | Points |
|----------|------------------|--------|
| <b>1</b> | Casey Stoner     | 350    |
| <b>2</b> | Jorge Lorenzo    | 260    |
| <b>3</b> | Andrea Dovizioso | 228    |
| <b>4</b> | Dani Pedrosa     | 219    |
| <b>5</b> | Ben Spies        | 176    |



## Moto2 RESULT

### Riders

|          |                         |           |
|----------|-------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | Michele Pirro, ITA      | Moriwaki  |
| <b>2</b> | Mika Kallio, FIN        | Suter     |
| <b>3</b> | Dominique Aegerter, Swi | Suter     |
| <b>4</b> | Anthony West, AUS       | MZ-RE Hon |
| <b>5</b> | Kenny Noyes, USA        | FTR       |

## Moto2 FINAL CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

| Riders   |                 | Points |
|----------|-----------------|--------|
| <b>1</b> | Stefan Bradl    | 274    |
| <b>2</b> | Marc Marquez    | 251    |
| <b>3</b> | Andrea Iannone  | 177    |
| <b>4</b> | Alex De Angelis | 174    |
| <b>5</b> | Thomas Luthi    | 151    |

## 125cc RESULT

### Riders

|          |                       |         |
|----------|-----------------------|---------|
| <b>1</b> | Maverick Viñales, SPA | Aprilia |
| <b>2</b> | Nico Terol, SPA       | Aprilia |
| <b>3</b> | Hector Faubel, SPA    | Aprilia |
| <b>4</b> | Efren Vazquez, SPA    | Derbi   |
| <b>5</b> | Jonas Folger, GER     | Aprilia |

## 125cc FINAL CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

| Riders   |                  | Points |
|----------|------------------|--------|
| <b>1</b> | Nico Terol       | 302    |
| <b>2</b> | Johann Zarco     | 262    |
| <b>3</b> | Maverick Viñales | 248    |
| <b>4</b> | Sandro Cortese   | 225    |
| <b>5</b> | Hector Faubel    | 177    |

# DUST BARELY SETTLES ON '11 AND '12 IS GO

I'm not sure too much can be read into the testing and activity in Valencia. In terms of lap times of the top riders we never got a true picture of the pace of the 800s this weekend in the race, and as such it's hard to draw comparisons with this season.

However it is clear, early on, that the factories are pretty much where they were by the time of the chequered flag on Sunday: Honda out in front, Yamaha close behind needing to find that step to match them and Ducati with work to do to catch up to the Japanese.

We're still unsure about where Suzuki are, though it seems likely there will be some kind of presence in the grid. Whether with Bautista, De Puniet (who climbed on the bike at Valencia) or Hopkins remains to be seen, but it has to be good news for the series if they stick around. Expect an announcement pretty soon,

perhaps even before the next issue of OTOR. It looks as though Iannone will join Gresini which I think is a good move for both parties and an effort by the team to fill the massive hole left by Simoncelli in terms of an Italian rider and the San Carlo sponsorship profile, and the door may not yet be closed on new Moto2 champ Bradl making the step up either.

The same goes for the CRT bikes, we're not quite sure where we are yet with a whole gaggle of new combinations out on track this week and nobody quite certain of which efforts are seriously expecting to be on the grid and which are just getting an idea of how far away they will be.

Clearly CRT seems to be a popular choice, but lots of work is on the agenda for them and their factory counterparts. Interesting moments for the sport regardless...





## SOME STATS TO WRAP UP THE 2011 SEASON...

- Sunday's race was the 750th in MotoGP/500cc class history.
- Casey Stoner equalled Mick Doohan's 12 poles in a season on Saturday, although Doohan's came in 15 races instead of 18.
- He also equalled Rossi and Lorenzo's record 16 podiums in one year.
- Stoner's 40th career win takes him to 10th overall in the all-time GP winners' list. He is also fifth overall in premier class wins behind Rossi, Agostini, Doohan and Hailwood.

- Valentino Rossi DNF'd three races in a row for the first time in his career.
- Loris Capirossi has taken part in 41.2% of all Grand Prix events that have ever been staged.
- Honda have now taken 60 constructors titles in MotoGP, 18 in the premier class.
- Maverick Viñales is the youngest ever rider to take back-to-back GP wins.

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## CHALKING OFF ANOTHER SEASON...

By Gavin Emmett

**L**ooking back at the 2011 MotoGP World Championships, here are five things we have learnt...

### 1. Honda wanted this championship. Badly.

And they were determined to get it since early last season. The \$700,000-per-gearbox expense alone should tell you that, but add to that the finding of the last jigsaw piece in the crucial signing of Stoner after two races of the 2010 championship, and you realise this title took planning and execution.

**2. Stoner is that good.** Some of us have been saying it for years, but others are going to be forced to do an about-face on the bristly Australian. Some with their head in the sand will simply trawl out the "he's won on the best bike... again" mantra, without acknowledging his presence being the only common factor between Honda and Ducati's MotoGP World Championships in the 800cc era.

**3. Ducati has a lot of work to do.** It now seems fairly clear that the 800cc Desmosedici worked with Stoner in spite of its basic flaws rather than the other way round. The team has only two podiums to its name this year, no good for the likes of Rossi and crew who are used to success, nor for the factory who have been convinced that a radical overhaul of their designs have become necessary. The hope is that there has been enough time testing the frame this year to allow serious progress to be made in '12. Another 2011 like this is not an option.

**4. The 800cc bikes won't be missed too much.** The move to the 800s from the 990s was done principally on account of safety, and while it is true that the increase in speeds would have been scarcely big if something hadn't have been done the advances that have been made with the electronics have negated this aspect and ultimately allowed the gap to widen between factory and independent teams. It has always been thus of course, but now it seems with the advent of 1000cc and the CRT set-ups, Dorna and the FIM are intent on making this gap smaller again.

**Honda wanted this...the \$700,000 per gearbox expense tells you that...**

### 5. Nothing is predictable in motorsport.

There were unexpectedly dramatic happenings over the last third of the campaign such as outgoing champion Lorenzo losing part of his finger in Australia, effectively handing the MotoGP title to Stoner. Marc Márquez making the comeback of all comebacks to lead Moto2 after the Japanese GP, only to make an error in Australia which he recovered from astonishingly and then have the misfortune of crashing on a freakishly damp track in Malaysia and ending his plight. Thus gifting the title to Bradl. Terol almost crashing out in Malaysia before Johann Zarco then had his first race smash of the year in Valencia to give the Valencian the last crown.





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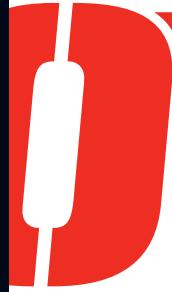
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# WHAT HAPPENS ON THE ROAD STAYS ON THE ROAD...

By Matthew Roberts

It's not every day you wake up next to a famous actor with your pants around your ankles. That is not a sentence I ever hoped to hear myself say with but it's probably the moment that best sums up the bizarre madness that was Viva Valencia! From a rousing send off at London's Ace Cafe to three laps of the Ricardo Tormo circuit on the eve of an emotional final round of the MotoGP season, the trip was five days and 1500 miles of fast roads and lots of fun aboard the Yamaha R1 that Jorge Lorenzo rode at the Isle of Man earlier this year.

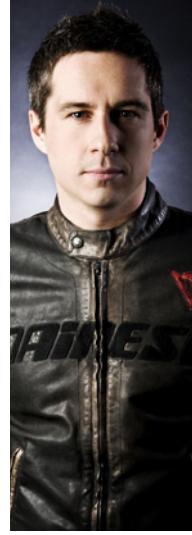
Of course there were plenty of relentless motorway mileage but the stunning scenery and evenings in convivial company more than made up for the saddle sores and stiff shoulders. The first night was spent at a champagne house in Reims, the second at a chateau in Beaujolais where we dined with a French Count (that's Count) and the third in a budget motel in Montpellier where I shared a tiny twin room with poor Danny John-Jules.

Danny is of Caribbean descent and designed only to survive in tropical temperatures, which makes sharing a room with him a hellish inferno. That's my excuse for kicking off my pants in the middle of the night and leaving my 'meat and two veg on display', as he described it the next morning - still in shock (presumably at its enormity). From there we headed south past Barcelona to meet Randy Mamola, who took us to visit the Sitges-Terramar oval - a two-kilometre track with sixty degree banking that has been aban-

doned since the 1950s but is now due to be reopened as a museum. We managed a few tentative laps before Randy jumped on the R1 and showed us how it was done, ripping around the top of the banking.

After a final bizarre night and morning yoga session at a meditation retreat with a bendy blonde from Sweden we made it down to Valencia where Jorge signed the bike, which will be up for auction at Motorcycle Live on the 20th November in aid of Riders for Health.

For more info: [www.motoventures.co.uk](http://www.motoventures.co.uk)  
(photo by Motoventures)



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FEATURE



By Getty images

# THE WORLD CHAMPION: AN INSIDER'S VIEW...

By Adam Wheeler, Stoner interview by Gavin Emmett  
Photos by Red Bull Content Pool and Honda Pro Images

**2011 has undoubtedly been Casey Stoner's year. His staggering 100% podium record means that a first season as a works Honda rider was even more emphatic and resolute than his maiden success with Ducati in 2007; a term that ultimately saw him hoist by his own petard with fingers pointed at the Desmosedici as the reason for his emergence.**

**Of course those claims have evaporated with Valentino Rossi's well-documented travails throughout the last nine months. Instead of a more conventional interview/portrait of the spiky but interesting Australian (although you can also read one of those in these pages) we asked our two MotoGP writers, Matthew Roberts and Gavin Emmett, who have both seen Stoner grow, mature and flourish since his Grand Prix debut in 2001, to offer their thoughts on the man and the accomplished mission....**

**On the moment that Stoner was destined for greatness...**

**MR:** The second race of 2002 in South Africa. Casey was sixteen, riding a 250 in his first full season because Alberto Puig couldn't get him a decent 125 so he stuck him on the Aprilia with Lucio Cecchinello's team. It was a semi-factory bike and Marco Melandri – who'd win the title that year – was on the full factory Aprilia. Marco took off at the front and Casey just bolted and went after him. He was so over-the-limit in terms of the pace that it was only a matter of time before he crashed but I just thought at the time 'my god, that kid has got talent, and balls'. I was a fan from that race on and we became good friends. There are a few guys that do special things in the smaller classes and invariably they go on to bigger things and he for sure was one of those. I couldn't say then that he'd be a world champion but it was easy to see that he was different.

**GE:** So many people, like Mick Doohan, had talked about him before he came into the championship. I can remember Casey doing wheelies on his bicycle through the paddock at Donington Park in 2001 on what was his Grand Prix debut. There has always been this determination in Casey and at his second race in MotoGP at Qatar he was very fast, took pole position and then made the podium the next race in Turkey on what was a satellite bike in the last year of the 990s. He was doing things you were not supposed to do if you weren't on a works machine. He always had bags of talent but for me it was the start of 2006 when

## FEATURE

### CASEY STONER

you could really see that he had 'it'. There were a few crashes that year but the chance came up with Ducati when Sete Gibernau pulled back and Marco Melandri wasn't available and he hit his stride.

#### **On whether he sorted out the Honda, or Honda sorted it out for him...**

**MR:** I suppose it was a bit of both. The Honda is a really good bike and has been for the last two years. Dani Pedrosa had been a bit unlucky with injuries albeit those were from a couple of his own mistakes. He could and perhaps should have been world champion by now on that bike. The RCV was ready to win a championship and Casey showed his adaptability by getting on it at the first test and rode it to the limit from the very start. Maybe he did get lucky with Dani being injured again but he's been on the podium every race. I've seen him pull seconds on the others from the first cold practice session of a GP. The different tracks or different conditions don't seem to matter and it is because of the incredible feel he has on the bike. If he were to jump on a Yamaha tomorrow then he'd set the fastest time.

**GE:** I think the Honda was nearly there and he was the final part of the jigsaw. We saw at the end of last year that the bike was on the 'verge' and that clutch was being developed and they were going in that direction. You put an absolute demon of a rider on top of that and you can see what happened. When Valentino went to Ducati they were both putting their reputations on the line but more so Ducati because Valentino had nothing to prove and had already been to Yamaha and turned their fortunes around. They have chucked the baby out with the bath water to try and change things but they never really did that with Casey. Remember that he was able to make that bike work and won three races towards the end of 2010. Casey has this

innate ability to be quick instantly. The riders call it 'feeling' and he has it in abundance. I remember sitting next to him on a flight once and he explained that he could feel exactly when the plane was bobbing and moving around; if he has that kind of sensitivity on a bike...

He knows what he needs to do to go quickly. I also remember him saying that he never understood why someone has to do so many laps in practice or testing. He'll do three, and then say he knows what needs changing. There was little point in doing more laps and trying to ride around a problem that needed to be fixed. You will know when he is going to have a good weekend because he is up there right from the beginning. What makes him so formidable are the times where it hasn't gone well on Friday and Saturday – like at Laguna this year – and he has been able to turn it around.

#### **On whether Stoner had the title in his hands right from the first pre-season tests...**

**MR:** I knew he would be fast in the tests and that he'd challenge for the championship but I also thought Jorge would be quicker and more consistent than he was. I didn't expect the Hondas to have the advantage over the Yamas that they had. After Jorge had crashed at Silverstone and Casey was getting things together I thought 'yeah, this is his to lose'. Casey would complain about stuff not working but he'd still be half a second quicker than everyone else and moan that something is not right. I think his team deserve a lot of credit for this year and the faith they have in him has completely paid-off. Some of those guys left Ducati in a similar scenario to Casey in that everyone was saying 'yeah it was all down to the bike' when in fact they had to work around problems. Laguna Seca this year when they nailed the right set-up for the race after a misfiring programme of practice was a great example of why they are the unsung heroes of this championship.



By Gold and Goose



By Andrew Northcott

**GE:** He was favourite from the start of the year because he seemed to have it all working. I couldn't look beyond him and I told so many people to put money on him! He had to be consistent because Jorge was never that far away and Dani, without his injuries, would also have taken points off him.

**On the effect this title will have on entrenched team-mate Dani Pedrosa...**

**MR:** I've been saying for a couple of years, and Alberto Puig [Pedrosa's long-time manager and mentor] pulled me up on it a few seasons ago, that it is make-or-break time for Dani. He has not been lucky but he has been a factory MotoGP rider for five years now and he has got to challenge for the title. I wouldn't rule him out, and 'on his day' he is perhaps faster than Casey, but the difference is that Casey can ride the bike when it is not right or the circumstances are not right...and he has made less mistakes.

**GE:** It means that next year really is a put-up-or-shut-up, especially with Marc Marquez waiting in the wings. Dani is still loved by the Spanish public but he needs an injury-free season. He was really in with a chance after Portugal until the accident at Le Mans when he broke his collarbone. Dani is quick but the problem he has is that he does have 'off-days' or 'off-weekends'. A bad day for Casey this year has meant a third place.

**On what Casey is like and how he is to work with...**

**MR:** He can be quite difficult to deal with if you work in the media because he doesn't

particularly like that side of his job. When you have to force him to do stuff and you know he doesn't really want to do it then it can put a bit of a strain on the relationship. It can lead to a misunderstanding of his character because he is not interested in being famous or lauded. He doesn't crave the attention or the confirmation that a lot of us search for from other people that what we do and the way we are is acceptable or right. He is happy with the way he is and thinks he is right all of the time! He dislikes attention and this means people can judge him wrongly because he is actually very sweet, very kind, humble and thoughtful.

**GE:** He is so Australian it is not funny. He is 'straight down the line' and if you know how to take him then he is brilliant and will give you such honest answers. There is absolutely no bullshit. Some people see that as being arsy or awkward. I think a lot of journalists have a grudging respect for what he has to say and he took a lot of shit in 2007. He just wants to race and maybe that means the PR side isn't that great but you tend to find that with most of the riders. It can be hard to get them to do anything. It seems like the sponsors don't have enough of a grip over the riders. It appears to be the opposite in Formula one. There is a lack of cohesion in MotoGP; for the amount the riders are being paid – and they are entitled to whatever they can get – there needs to be more accountability for promotion. I've told this to Casey in the past but he has his own mind and he'll have no problem telling you what his priorities are...he is in the same mould as Doohan or Lawson.

## CASEY STONER



### On being a worthy champion and getting the credit he deserves...

**MR:** I think he is finally getting the credit he deserves actually and this year has helped. Valentino's word has been law in this paddock for such a long time and it has taken him to go to Ducati and – because he is a gracious guy and does give credit where it is due – to say 'the bike is not good enough and I cannot believe what Casey had done' for people to finally credit the rider and not the bike. Obviously he is a worthy world champion and I think he is going to win a lot more. I think it will take a lot from Lorenzo and Yamaha to raise their game and beat him.

**GE:** Definitely a worthy champion. He is a pure bred racer. No PR spin and there will be people out there that like this. He has been the rider of the 800s, opening and closing the era with titles. A genius on a motorbike for me.

**Stoner is the fifth most successful rider of all time in MotoGP with 33 victories in the premier class. He equalled the records for most pole positions (12, set by Mick Doohan) and podiums (Valentino Rossi and Jorge Lorenzo) with sixteen in a single season. He has won Grands Prix in 125 and 250cc classes. He is still only 26.**



By Andrew Northcott



**On evaluating 2011...**

**CS:** Definitely an eventful season what with changing manufacturers and every track being like new in terms of set up. Then we had this disappointment at the end. There have been a lot of ups and downs and it will be one to remember, in good ways and bad.

**On his focus for the title...**

**CS:** I never really try and look too far ahead and just try to do the best job I can with every weekend. If you went into a race thinking you are going to be successful then it can quickly blow up in your face. If everything looks good and you are doing the best job you can then you can't ask for more. That is the way we have taken it this season.

**Handling the status of being favourite...**

**CS:** The thing that gave us confidence was that on day one we were fast, on two day we were fastest and from then on we have continued to get stronger and stronger through testing. We got pole at Jerez, which is a track I have really struggled with in the past. Unfortunately we were not able to do that race in the dry – or even finish that race – but we have been a lot higher up at tracks where he have had problems in the past. We had to make sure that we were smooth and fast and that we didn't make any mistakes. I could have gone fifty points down on Jorge in a matter of a few races and that would have been impossible to bring back. I never really think about what people say. It is more about how we feel inside the team.

**Was the win at Laguna Seca a key moment?**

**CS:** I don't think there was any key moment. You can pinpoint races in any season and say

they were important. In the two before Laguna we were definitely fast enough at Mugello but made a mistake with tyre pressure and then both myself and the team were a bit nervous about what had happened in Italy. We tried to make sure the bike was set-up to last the race but we lost speed because messing around to deal with tyre temperatures isn't necessarily the right way forward. At Laguna we were trying the same things and I said 'let's just get it set up and I'll manage the situation'. We didn't make any mistakes and Laguna was a great race, possibly the best of the season or one of.

**On winning the championship at Phillip Island...**

**CS:** That was something pretty special. I don't think many people can win the world championship on their birthday, at their home Grand Prix and by making it five wins in a row. There are many riders who will not get any of those opportunities and to have it all in one day is something that will go down with us for a long, long time. At this moment in time I love each and every weekend. Even though the championship is fantastic I still want to win each and every race of the year. I'm not the sort of person to go for statistics but I am proud of the career I've had so far.

**On the future...**

**CS:** I'm not really too sure on the future but I think going to the 1000s was sensible. I don't think the 800s was such a great category. We still had plenty of power and too much to put on the ground 90% of the time. I think the 1000s will be something people on the street-bikes can relate to and development can go to directly. I think next year will be a lot of fun but beyond that it depends on what decisions they make.

SX

# PARIS BERCY SX

BERCY · OCTOBER 28th, 29th, 30th

King of Bercy: Kyle Chisholm, Yamaha



# PARISIAN NIGHTS

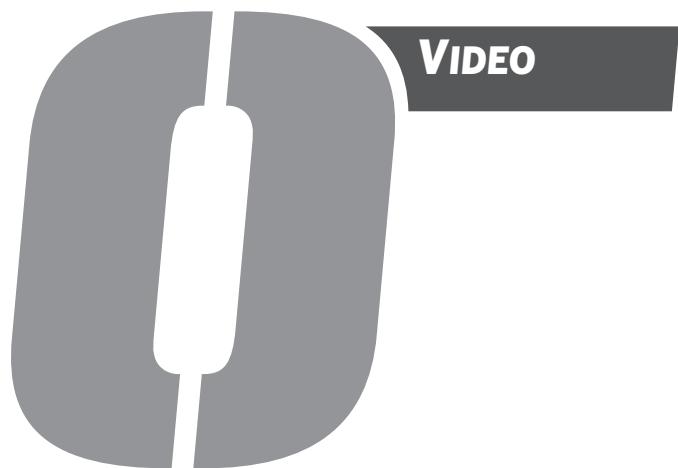
Photos by Monster Energy Europe



Kyle Chisholm flew to France on a promise and with an exhaust pipe in his bag and walked away with one of the most prestigious supercross titles, 'King of Bercy', after claiming three podium finishes at the 29th edition of the meeting inside the French capital.

The American, on a privateer Yamaha in what was his second consecutive appearance around the tight Parisian course, led an all-U.S. rostrum with Eli Tomac (Honda) second and Jake Weimer (Kawasaki) in third. Chisholm went 2-1-3 on Friday, Saturday and Sunday as 2010 champ Justin Barcia 'ran' into some problems on the first night but won on Sunday with Tomac ruling Friday's Main Event. Thanks in part to the build-up, atmosphere, risky track that runs through part of the stadium's tunnels, light shows and a bit of glitz and glamour, Bercy is without a doubt Europe's premier indoor racing event and the French fans traditionally fill the stands each evening...even if the meeting can seem to feel like 'Groundhog Day' for workers and competitors by the time day three comes around. There has been some rumination that Bercy is missing the 'big hitters' of former days and while Chisholm is still to confirm an AMA saddle for 2012 the presence of Weimer, Barcia and Tomac means that the cream of young American talent still consider the spectacle worthy.













# 2012 CALENDAR BREAKS DAY AND CONDENSES

With only eight free weekends in six months, two rounds in the depths of South America and then a bounce across to the banks of the Volga in Russia, the 2012 FIM Motocross World Championship will be another intense trek for the factories, teams and riders of the MX1 and MX2 classes.

Released last week the latest version of the calendar involves a particularly busy finale with the Motocross of Nations also pushed backwards. Of course this is not the final version. Two rounds of the sixteen have yet to be filled with Spanish and European races expected to join the seams. The crucial question for Spain is the suitability of a venue that can rely on sound financial backing and also offer a standard sufficient for the current level of the world championship. La Bañeza fell short in several areas this summer but considering it was a last minute 'fix' after the cancellation of the Catalan round in Bellpuig it worked in terms of a short-term perspective. Although there are rumours that La Bañeza are planning to extend the compact facility, the truth is that a lot of infrastructure work needs to be done to hoist circuit above national level. Encouragingly OTOR has learned that popular site Talavera de la Reina

(around 100km south-west of Madrid) is in negotiation with Youthstream to run a Grand Prix for the first time since 2000. Hopefully the deal will come off in what is a major catchment area and Spain's leading rider, Jonathan Barragan, also hails from the city.

Ernee in France, close to Le Mans and last a host to the world championship in 2009, was allegedly pencilled in for the 'European' slot and the penultimate meeting and the distance in terms of dates from the GP of France at St Jean D'Angely would make this fairly practical even if it does mean that Holland and France will share four of the sixteen dates between them. Other observations? Moved from the final round of the season for the last two years to round three in April, fingers will be crossed that rain does not fall on Fermo in Italy otherwise the hillside logistics will get messy. Teams will face practically all of July on the road negotiating the path between Sweden, Latvia and Russia and it is great to see Matterley Basin, one of the best tracks in Europe, on the calendar again for the British Grand Prix and the organisational hiccups seen this August are bound to be eradicated for the third FIM World Championship event at the Winchester site.

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April 9th - Valkenswaard / NETHERLANDS  
April 22nd - Sevlievo / BULGARIA  
April 29th - Fermo / ITALY  
May 13th - Queretaro / MEXICO  
May 20th - Beto Carrero / BRAZIL  
June 3rd - St Jean D'Angely / FRANCE  
June 10th - Agueda / PORTUGAL  
June 17th - TBA  
July 1st - Uddevalla / SWEDEN

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July 15th - Kegums / LATVIA  
July 22nd - Semigorje / RUSSIA  
August 5th - Loket / CZECH REPUBLIC  
August 19th - Matterley Basin / UK  
September 2nd - Lierop / NETHERLANDS  
September 9th - TBA  
September 23rd - Teutschenthal / GERMANY  
September 30th - MXoN/Lommel, BELGIUM

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# RIDERS HEALING UP & READY FOR LONG WINTER

Riders from three factory teams, Clement Desalle (Suzuki), David Philippaerts (Yamaha) and Max Nagl (KTM) are cracking on with recovery and rehab in the coming weeks although it will be some time before these three title contenders are fully active again. The update with Philippaerts, who broke both of his wrists in a horrific training crash in August, can be read in these very pages while Desalle issued a blog last week stating that

he hopes to be given the all-clear after clean-up operations on both shoulders to begin full training. The Belgian did comment that he expects to be off the works RM-Z450 until a week or two before Christmas. Nagl has informed his fans through his website that an operation on his dislodged spinal disc went well in Belgium at the end of October but it could be three or four months before he is able to consider firing up the 350SX-F again.

## CAIROLI BETWEEN 350 & 450 FOR 2012

After claiming the last two FIM MX1 World Championships on a factory KTM 350SX-F Tony Cairoli has admitted that he could be swayed by the firm's new 450 model. The Sicilian committed to OTOR this week after throwing his leg over a motorcycle for the first time last weekend since his crash and subsequent wrist fracture at the Motocross of Nations on September 18th.

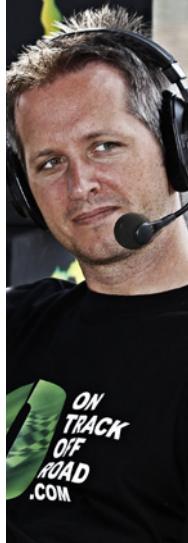
"On November 14th I will test both the 350 and the 450," he said. "At the moment I don't really have an idea of what I want to use for the 2012 GPs; first I want to test both."

"I hadn't touched a bike since the Nations so to do a road trip with some friends last weekend was really good fun," he added. The Sicilian has also had time to send up 'The Godfather' by posing for a shoot and front cover of stylish and popular Italian magazine 'Riders'. Check out the photo. Nice 'tach Tony...



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# IN THE MATERIAL WORLD...

By Adam Wheeler

My calendar for travel and work at race-related events started around mid-February and came to a close in November with a rapid trip to Valencia for a poignant final meeting of eighteen in the MotoGP series. I was there on Thursday and Friday to grab some material and while I'll let either Matt or Gav chat about the atmosphere that was tangibly heavy, there was an unmissable feeling that the mammoth workforce surrounding 125cc, Moto 2 and MotoGP categories were more anxious than usual to finish a long campaign that had tailed-off into disbelief and sadness.

Although I've attended at least one MotoGP round a season for the better part of ten-fifteen years the sheer behemoth the paddock has become never ceases to amaze me. Walking the kilometre or two downhill from the accreditation centre to the circuit on Thursday morning revealed the 'circus was definitely in town' as row after row of pristine semis stood guard; rear loaders nudging the pit garage doors and the front cabs staring at an assortment of hospitality suites with virtually every crew having to worry about the quality of the cooking as much as set-up of race machinery. The self-contained VIP area for the MotoGP teams/partners is a level up. The whole environment is teeming with staff (smaller teams run on up to ten-fifteen people, factory units nearing thirty-forty) until the weekend arrives and the place resembles the concourse of a major inner city station with media, officials, pass-holding fans, guests, sponsors, dignitaries, celebs all running or riding in different directions.

Not for the first time am I pulled into comparing it with the much more familiar home of the motocross paddock. There are similarities in truth. The presentation and organisation levels are equally

high and the people that call this dominion 'work' are fuelled by enthusiasm as much as they look forward to the paycheque. Of course it is another sphere of motorcycle racing altogether but I did wonder which sport was better placed to tackle the difficult economic climes surrounding racing now and for the coming years until people will again surge to buy motorcycles. With dwindling sales in several key territories (and of specific lines) it is hard to imagine the staggering investment that goes into placing a MotoGP outfit of two riders on the grid continuing abound. At the Ricardo Tormo circuit someone told me about the alleged price of the seamless shift gearbox the factory Honda team have been able to enjoy this season and if it is anywhere near the truth then an entire mid-level motocross Grand Prix team can be run for a year for the same six figure amount. Considering the size and spread of the Yamaha MotoGP effort between the works squad and Tech 3 it also shows how such a major effort can start to wobble slightly when two of the four protagonists face injury problems. The spectre of physical impairment is perhaps more acute in motocross and this was highlighted to absurd proportions in 2011. At least Moto2 and upcoming Moto3 might be a consolation for teams to still give their business associates a viable and visible window outside the premier class.

There is one area in which MotoGP wins hands down: the assault on the senses. While motocross is facing a serious battle to reduce its audibles, MotoGP is fascinatingly brash with the warbling growl of the four-strokes affecting everyone in earshot. The quite wonderful aroma of cleaning solutions, lubricants, fuel and pasta dishes combined is another reason to ensure an annual pilgrimage is made to this historic, unstable but sumptuous arena of racing.



# THIS IS HOW CHAMPIONS

**KEN ROCZEN & TONY CAIROLI, 2011**

One dominates the MX2 class in his debut year with KTM and wins his first world championship title with the KTM 250 SX-F. The other continues the success story of the KTM 350 SX-F in the MX1 class and celebrates his second world championship title with this unique bike. Ken Roczen and Tony Cairoli – victory at the double!

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Photos: R. Archer

# STEWART EXPLAINS JGR MOVE ON PULPMX.COM

One of the foremost authorities on the AMA scene (even though he is Canadian and people like reminding him of the fact!), Steve Matthes runs a comprehensive, relentless and frankly excellent podcast suite on his www.pulpmx.com website and managed to grab a chat with James Stewart in the wake of the news regarding his signature for the JGR team which keeps the former champ in blue. It means that KTM, Honda, Kawasaki and Yamaha will have the supercross 'aliens' of Dungey, Reed, Villopoto and Stewart respectively pushing for the 2012 title over seventeen races beginning on January 7th.

"It was hit and miss last year, and I wasn't feeling 'it' when we were doing some outdoor testing," he commented. "I got to the point where I was saying 'if we don't sort something out then I'm quitting, I'm done'. I rode every bike and was talking to the Suzuki guys a lot but I asked one thing of the Gibbs crew and said 'if they can do it, then I'd sign right there' and I think

when we get to Anaheim – after some more testing – then you guys will see what I am talking about. It was a great deal. The whole three year deal, the stock car racing option later and the whole package of going back to what an actual factory team means. I felt like I needed to be on a team where I could win and I am happy with my choice."

"There are a lot of things different on the bike, one being the suspension," he continued. "There is no knock on the team I was with because those guys were awesome but the resources were not there. I feel that the resources to go out and win with JGR are there and when I asked them to change things it was done. That was a big factor. I do believe the Yamaha is good. It takes time to get out there and work off the cobwebs. I am optimistic now and I know what I have is better than what I had last year."

To hear the full chat either click [here](#). Or find 'The Steve Matthes Show' on iTunes.



# MX SPORTS LOOKING SOUTH FOR 2012

The Lucas Oil AMA Motocross Championship could be heading southeast for the first time since 1997 if MX Sports President, Davey Coombs, can fulfil a goal of wider distribution of the series. Coombs alluded to the search for a venue in his weekly collaborative column on seminal website [www.racerxonline.com](http://www.racerxonline.com) last week and expounded on the subject to OTOR.

"As far as the southeast goes, it is vital for us to get a race in that part of the country soon," he said. "It has long been under-served by American Motocross ever since Bill West turned his Gatorback National in Gainesville, Florida, into a supercross race instead. The southeast has a huge motocross following and it shows every year with the AMA Supercross events in Atlanta, Georgia, and Daytona, Florida. But there are some obstacles. For instance, the race must fall somewhere between the end of May and the end of August - the window for the Lucas Oil AMA Motocross Series - but it's very hot down there in the summer. Also, the series is capped at 12 rounds by agreement between the AMA, MX Sports and the OEMs. A thirteenth round would not go over well in this economy so we have to move a race, and that will cause some hard feelings somewhere. The easiest choice is to move one of the two Pennsylvania rounds, but both High Point (Mt. Morris) and Steel City (Delmont) are very popular events."

"Right now, there are a few very good possibilities in Alabama and Georgia, and we have some places we've yet to visit in the Carolinas too," he added. "We need a great track, which is probably the easiest part. We also need to be near a strong population base, we need to have good public access roads, a place to park

about 60 semis, and the modern conveniences of things like cell-phone coverage and nearby hotels and restaurants, and so on and so forth. I am trying to get it wrapped up for 2012 but it's been more difficult than I thought to juggle all of the concerns and make everyone happy. But MX Sports is committed to bringing a round of the series to the southeast as soon as possible."

In 2011 the twelve round championship – won by Ryan Villopoto and Dean Wilson in the 450 and 250 classes respectively – travelled to ten states in a seventeen week period.



FEATURE



# FINDING THE WAY BACK: DAVID PHILIPPAERTS...

By Adam Wheeler, Portrait photos by Max Zanzani

I hadn't seen David Philippaerts, factory Yamaha rider and 2008 MX1 World Champion, for three months. The 27 year old was now showing me the ripped skin marks on both of his wrists where a horrific training smash in Germany just prior to the Grand Prix of Czech Republic, round twelve of fifteen in the FIM Motocross World Championship at the start of August, had momentarily seemed to throw his career into the balance. The numerous breaks to the tough Italian's arms required three operations and a three-week spell of convalescence in Germany before he could return to his home north of Milan.

'DP' is now adjusting to something of a normal life and thinking of full-scale preparation for 2012, which will be his sixth in the premier class and fifth on the blackened works Yamahas. Philippaerts' practice smash was just one of several shocking incidents that played out through a physically battering 2011 campaign for a number of top riders. The former champ chats here about the accident and the aftermath and why he is determined to fire back in what could be a great story of achievement in the face of adversity...

## **David, you've had injuries before but this must have been the worst of your career...**

**DP:** Yes, it was the biggest crash of my career. Physically I now feel OK and mentally that helps. I can see - and feel - that I can be like I was before and this makes you really determined to get in even better shape. My focus is to get stronger.

## **What did they have to do to fix the wrists?**

**DP:** I have two plates and ten screws, one that is five centimetres long, in the right arm. In the left another plate, seven bolts and two staples for the ligaments. Seventeen screws altogether! They will remain inside because the doctor explained that the materials are the latest generation and they have only been using this type of stuff for two years.

## DAVID PHILIPPAERTS

**You were in hospital for three weeks. There must have been many ‘ups and downs’ in that period...**

**DP:** Yes, because I had three different operations, which meant every four or five days I went into surgery again. I was in a cycle of ‘up and down’ with my body. I would get out of the operating room and have blood and pain, get slightly better, feel a bit stronger and then go in there again. I was in Germany so there was not many people to speak with or things to read or watch. Although the medical people there were amazing. I would have never had treatment like that in Italy. I’m happy I crashed in Germany!

**You lost traction on an uphill step-up. When think about crash do you think ‘idiot’ or was there nothing you could do?**

**DP:** I have thought about it and there were things I could have done, like chucking away the bike and not holding on and in that very quick moment perhaps I made the wrong decision. I’m not sure how it happened but I think I might have broken one wrist when I landed with the bike and the other when I hit the ground. Like most crashes it happened very fast. I went to get up and looked at my hands that were facing the wrong way and then I just spun out. I can’t remember much more.

**Was there ever a moment, even a brief phase, where you thought your career might be over?**

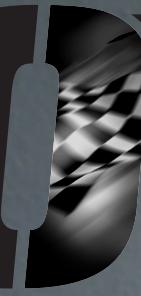
**DP:** No. In the beginning I thought ‘oh shit’. The pain was incredible but once I got used to that then I knew I had to reset my body and start again. For eighteen years I have been training and building up and this four-month period has been the longest ‘break’. Maybe I

cannot get back to what I was, but I am really going to try. We will have to see in January and February when I am really getting up to speed. I never considered stopping because racing is such a huge part of my life. It is what I have worked for so long and what I enjoy; the reason to get up every day. Even when I eventually stop racing because I’m too slow or old or whatever I will still like to be involved in the whole scene.

**Even though it involved frustration and pain, was it beneficial in some way to have that break from the demands of the sport?**

**DP:** Yes in a way. After the three operations my body just needed a rest. There was a lot of pain and aches and my muscles just seemed to vanish. I had never experienced this in my life. Now, three months after the crash, I am more ‘normal’. I was able to make use of the time to do things I usually want to but cannot manage because of the training or the travelling. Stuff like visiting sponsors, organising the house and taking care of other parts of my racing. I was a bit of a nuisance to Alice [girlfriend] and my friends for a while because I couldn’t do things by myself and had two casts on my arms but the recovery has gone OK. In some ways it went quicker than I thought it would and then in other ways I had to stop myself from trying to do some exercise. The hardest part was the sitting around when it looked and felt like I was almost back to being fine. I had to wait for the doctor’s ‘OK’ because there was quite a lot to heal inside. I am reaching a point where it will soon be behind me and I think having that moment to make me realise what I have gives me that added motivation to be better and stronger than what I was.





## BACKPAGE

By David Piole &  
Alexandre Chailan







**ON  
TRACK  
OFF  
ROAD**

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**'On-track Off-road'** is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at [www.ontrackoffroad.com](http://www.ontrackoffroad.com) every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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**Ray Archer** Photographer

**Steve Cox** Photo-journalist and AMA MX and SX correspondent

**Matthew Roberts** Television Presenter and MotoGP correspondent

**Gavin Emmett** TV commentator/Presenter and MotoGP correspondent

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**Cover shot:** Casey Stoner leaves them all behind...by Andrew Northcott

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